97-84113-1

An appeal to the enlightened sentiment of...

Washington, D.C.

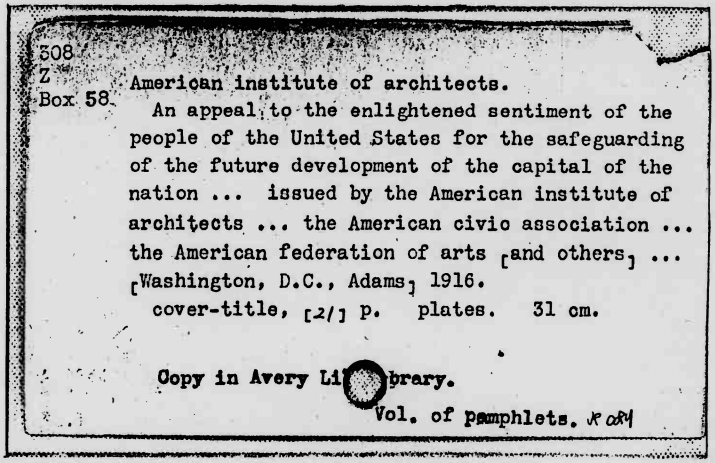
1916

97-84113-1
MASTER NEGATIVE #

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES
PRESERVATION DIVISION

BIBLIOGRAPHIC MICROFORM TARGET

ORIGINAL MATERIAL AS FILMED - EXISTING BIBLIOGRAPHIC RECORD



308
Z
Box 58

American institute of architects.
An appeal to the enlightened sentiment of the people of the United States for the safeguarding of the future development of the capital of the nation ... issued by the American institute of architects ... the American civic association ... the American federation of arts [and others] ... [Washington, D.C., Adams,] 1916.
cover-title, [2/] p. plates. 31 cm.

Copy in Avery Library.
Vol. of pamphlets.

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: *Reproductions may not be made without permission from Columbia University Libraries.*

TECHNICAL MICROFORM DATA

FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 9:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: (IA) IIA IB IIB

DATE FILMED: 6-6-97 INITIALS: PB

TRACKING # : MSH 21372

FILMED BY PRESERVATION RESOURCES, BETHLEHEM, PA.

BIBLIOGRAPHIC IRREGULARITIES

MAIN ENTRY: .....

.....

An appeal to the enlightened sentiment of the people of the United States for the safeguarding of the...

Bibliographic Irregularities in the Original Document:

List all volumes and pages affected; include name of institution if filming borrowed text.

_____Page(s) missing/not available:_____

_____Volume(s) missing/not available:_____

_____Illegible and/or damaged page(s):_____

_____

_____Page(s) or volume(s) misnumbered:_____

_____Bound out of sequence:_____

X
_____Page(s) or volume(s) filmed from copy borrowed from: New York Public Library

(Photocopy of entire pamphlet)

_____

_____Other:_____

_____

_____Inserted material:_____

TRACKING#: MSH21372

FILMED IN WHOLE OR PART FROM A COPY BORROWED FROM:

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY

2.5
2.2
2.0
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0
4.5
5.0
5.6
100 mm
1.0
1.1
1.25
1.4
1.6
1.8
2.5
2.2
2.0
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0
4.5
5.0
5.6
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
1234567890
1.0 mm
1.5 mm
2.0 mm
A5
2.5
2.2
2.0
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0
4.5
5.0
5.6

American Institute of Architects and others.

744417

AN APPEAL

TO THE

Enlightened Sentiment of the People of the United States

FOR THE

Safeguarding of the Future Development

OF THE

Capital of the Nation

"Ars longa—vita brevis"

"All these considerations make one feel how great are the opportunities here offered to you for the further adornment and beautification of this city. Nature has done so much, and you have, yourselves, already done so much that you are called upon to do more. You have such a chance offered to you here for building up a superb capital that it would be almost an act of ingratitude to Providence and to history and to the men who planted the city here if you did not use the advantages that you here enjoy."

BRYCE

THIS MATERIAL MAY BE PROTECTED BY THE COPYRIGHT LAW (TITLE 17, U.S. CODE)

ISSUED BY

The American Institute of Architects
The Octagon, Washington, D. C.

The American Civic Association
Washington, D. C.

The American Federation of Arts
Washington, D. C.

The American Institute of Consulting Engineers
New York, N. Y.

The American Scenic and Historic Preservation Society
New York, N. Y.

The American Society of Landscape Architects
Rochester, N. Y.

The Committee of One Hundred
Washington, D. C.

The National Academy of Design
New York, N. Y.

The National Sculpture Society
New York, N. Y.

MARCH, 1916

AAS

2 MS T

1. Municipal engineering D.C. Washington.

2. Power plants, D.C. Washington.

TD

Owing to the public-spirited co-operation of the National Geographic Society, whose headquarters are in Washington, D. C., we are enabled to use its very wonderful colored panorama of Washington. This beautiful visualization of the entire situation appeared originally in the March (1915) number of the National Geographic Magazine in connection with an article on the Capital City by former President Taft, and it is also made a part of the book just issued by the Society combining the articles by Mr. Taft and Viscount Bryce in permanent form. Acknowledgment of so rare a courtesy is a pleasure.

THE NEW YORK
PUBLIC LIBRARY
ASTOR, LENOX AND
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS

Foreword

Representatives of the societies which join the American Institute of Architects in issuing this appeal are personally familiar with the relationship of the environments of the site under discussion and, what is more important, are familiar with the plans and possibilities for the future development of Washington. They unhesitatingly endorse the platform on which this campaign for the safeguarding of the future development of our Capital City is being conducted and join with us in this appeal to awaken and bring into action the enlightened sentiment of the people of the United States.

Members of Congress feel aggrieved that the protest against the construction of the Central Heating, Lighting and Power plant has been delayed until after the contract was let. While the facts as set forth prove that up to the moment when the protests were made the affiliated bodies were unaware of this menace to the ultimate Washington, we are all of us broad-minded enough to accept our share of the responsibility for failing to learn before that these plans have been under consideration for some three years.

We must be fair in this as well as in our appreciation that defenders of the site are sincere in their contentions; for all questions have two sides.

Our motives have been attacked and our judgment has been questioned—let us prove the purity of the one and the soundness of the other by avoiding personal issues and relying for argument on facts alone.

The Treasury Department has carried out the instructions of Congress in preparing plans for this site, and Congress should be broad-minded enough to reconsider its previous action in the light of the objections of qualified experts—and this is all we *do* ask: reconsideration.

Whether the power house shall be built upon this site is the sole issue between the two sides—but with it is linked not only the fate of the advisory or expert authority of the Fine Arts Commission, but even the fate of its very existence—while more far-reaching still is the question as to the future of the plan for our "ultimate Washington." Is it to share the fate of L'Enfant's plan, so long lost to sight, which our years of superhuman effort reinstated as the fundamental and underlying authority?

Note carefully what our valiant friends, the engineers, say about the proposed site from the economic as well as the esthetic standpoint—consider the forcefulness of the protests of the entire architectural profession, of the landscape men, of the American Federation of Arts, and civic bodies throughout the entire United States, and you will feel no surprise when a little later you will note the responding wave of protest of public opinion evidencing its profound belief that the judgment of the Fine Arts Commission should be heeded, since the very purpose of the Commission is to safeguard the public's interest in its Capital City.

To those of us representing the societies issuing this appeal, who have felt impelled to ask this reconsideration, it is especially gratifying to realize that the champion of our cause in the Senate—the Hon. Francis G. Newlands—and the distinguished body of engineers whose views so effectively reenforce our every argument, all stand together in the belief that this is an enduring issue.

We have lost the first skirmish because the issue was clouded by its necessary inclusion in the urgent deficiency bill, which had to be put through—but whether we succeed in converting our lawmakers during the earlier stages of the struggle, or have to wait until the actual plant conveys the full horror of the picture we are now trying to visualize for those who can not read the sign "Stop, Look and Listen," our efforts shall be unremitting.

The present status of the struggle is briefly as follows: The amendment, calling for a reconsideration of the project, having been lost, there yet remains to be called upon the Calendar, Senator Newlands' Senate Joint Resolution 92, covering similar ground. This resolution was referred to the Senate Committee on Library, the committee having jurisdiction in the arts, and has brought forth a mass of most valuable testimony from both sides at the hearings held by this committee. We have reason to believe that many Senators who could not bring themselves to jeopardize the fate of an appropriation bill by supporting the amendment, will gladly vote in favor of the resolution. We can not but feel that personal pride on the part of the legislative body which selected the site, and the Executive Department which designed the plant, has replaced complete conviction as the motive force which we must overcome—and this is unfortunate, for we believe the pictures herewith presented would alone convert open-minded men not before aware of the magnitude of the impending danger. Public sentiment will prove the greatest factor in making visible the handwriting on the wall, and we therefore urge you—after a *careful study* of the *facts* we herewith present—to *write* or *wire* or *both* to the President of the United States, your two Senators and the Representative from your district, that, you vigorously protest against proceeding with construction of the power plant on a site to which experts in all qualified callings have taken exception. Even if, in the interim, the resolution should be defeated, do not cease activities which eventually must win.

Do not postpone this action, nor consider that your co-operation will not count. It *will*, when exercised in the light of knowledge of the situation; and we who are giving our disinterested service in your behalf have the right to ask that you support us in a crisis which involves the future of your Washington.

The American Institute of Architects,

JOHN LAWRENCE MAURAN,
President.

February 28th, 1916.

History

THE PARK COMMISSION

Under a resolution of the United States Senate, adopted March 8, 1901, the Committee on the District of Columbia was directed to consider and report to the Senate, plans for the development and improvement of the entire park system of the District of Columbia. The desirability of a comprehensive plan for the development of the District of Columbia had long been felt by Congress. Questions had arisen as to the location of public buildings, of preserving space for parks, of connecting and developing existing parks by attractive drives, and of providing for the recreation and health of a constantly growing population; and, in the absence of a well-considered plan, the solution of these grave problems had either been postponed or else had resulted in compromises that have marred the beauty and dignity of the national capital. In accordance with its instructions, the Senate Committee appointed an expert Commission consisting of Daniel H. Burnham, architect, of Chicago; Charles Follen McKim, architect, of New York; Augustus St. Gaudens, sculptor, of New York, and Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., landscape architect, of Brookline, Massachusetts, to act with them in the preparation of plans. The Commission was in practically continuous session for a period of ten months, during which it visited most of the important cities of Europe, and on January 15, 1902, Senator McMillan, the Chairman of the Committee, presented its report to the Senate. This report was published as Senate Report 166, Fifty-seventh Congress, First Session. The plans recommended were never formally adopted by governmental action, but additions which have since been made to the park system and the location of public buildings have until recently been determined in conformity with the Park Commission plans. Perhaps the most notable instance is that of the great Lincoln Memorial now under construction.

A GOVERNMENT POWER PLANT

In 1904 Mr. Bernard R. Green, who had been for many years in the Government service as a constructor of public works, with the assistance of Prof. S. Homer Woodbridge of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an eminent Mechanical Engineer, made an exhaustive investigation into the subject of a central power plant for the public buildings. His report was submitted to Congress on January 9, 1905. No further action was taken until 1911 when the Secretary of the Treasury appointed a commission of three engineers in the Government service for a further consideration of the project. This commission made its final report January 9, 1913. The commission advised the construction of a power plant and recommended a site at Fourteenth and Water Streets, fronting on the Washington Channel.

Both expert commissions were composed exclusively of engineers and the reasons given for the selection of the site were commercial and engineering reasons solely. The possible effect of the construction of the power plant at this site upon the further development of the Park Commission plans received no consideration from the architectural or landscape point of view.

In June, 1913, Congress authorized the construction of a power plant on the site recommended by the engineering commission. For three or four years prior to that time Congress had been discussing the propriety of turning that particular site over to the District of Columbia for the purpose of erecting an asphalt plant upon it and when the power plant was authorized, one-half the property then owned by the United States Government was reserved with the intention hereafter of utilizing it as a site for an asphalt plant, and the present act, under which the power house is being constructed provides for that eventuality.

THE ART COMMISSION

On May 17, 1910, by an act of Congress, a Commission of Fine Arts was created and its duties defined. In its original membership were such men as the late Chas. F. McKim and the late D. H. Burnham, both members of the Park Commission. In 1910 President Taft issued an executive order stating that no public buildings should be finally approved by the duly authorized officers until after such officers had submitted the plans to the Commission of Fine Arts. On November 28, 1913, President Wilson issued a similar executive order requiring that "Whenever new structures are to be erected in the District of Columbia, under the direction of the Federal Government,, which affect in any important way the appearance of the city, or whenever questions involving matters of art with which the Federal Government is concerned are to be determined finally, *action shall not be taken until* such plans and questions have been submitted to the Commission of Fine Arts."

The composition of the Commission of Fine Arts in January, 1916, was as follows: Charles Moore, of Detroit, Chairman (Mr. Moore was the Secretary of the Park Commission of 1901); Cass Gilbert, architect, of New York; Thomas Hastings, of the firm of Carrere & Hastings, architect, of New York; Pierce Anderson, architect, a partner of the late D. H. Burnham, of Chicago; Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., landscape architect, of Brookline, Massachusetts (Mr. Olmsted was a member of the Park Commission of 1901); Herbert Adams, sculptor, of New York; Edwin H. Blashfield, painter, of New York; Col. W. W. Harts, Officer in Charge of Public Buildings and Grounds of the District of Columbia, Secretary, *ex officio*.

THE PLANS FOR THE POWER HOUSE

The preparation of the plans for the power house was undertaken by the Supervising Architect of the Treasury Department under the authority conveyed by Congress, and with the assistance of Messrs. L. B. Stillwell & Co., of New York, engineers of wide experience in the design and construction of plants of this character, and in December, 1915, a contract for the construction of the building and plant was awarded to the J. M. Cornell Company of Washington and New York. Through an inadvertence, as stated by the Treasury Department, the plans were not submitted to the Art Commission prior to the award of the contract, as required by Executive Order above quoted. This fact having been called to the attention of the Treasury Department, the plans were submitted to the Art Commission on January 14, 1916. Prior to this date the Art Commission had no knowledge of the nature of the contemplated building. The plans were immediately referred to a sub-committee for preliminary consideration and at a special meeting on January 26, the Art Commission, after thorough consideration, disapproved the plans in the following words:

THE REPORT OF THE ART COMMISSION

"The plans submitted indicate a structure the exterior dimensions of which are 178 feet 8 inches long by 126 feet 6 inches wide, and having a height of from 80 to 90 feet above the level of the river, upon which are four large chimney stacks each about 16 feet in diameter and stated to be 188 feet in height above the ground, or about 195 feet above the river. A structure of this size and character would obviously be conspicuous wherever located in the city. From the Capitol, from the White House, from Arlington, from the Mall, from the War College and the water approach to Washington, from the Lincoln Memorial, from East and West Potomac Parks, which are now being developed, and from many other prominent points in the city the proposed plant will be a disagreeably conspicuous object in the landscape. Its close proximity to the Washington Monument will seriously affect the simple dignity of that structure and its great bulk and huge stacks will cause a deplorable change in the entire aspect of that section of the city. Furthermore, as the location of the Lincoln Memorial by Congress in Potomac Park leaves the southern terminus of the vista from the White House southwardly toward the river the most important site for a memorial structure left in the National Capital, this site would lose much of its effect and dignity by the construction of the plant as proposed."

"It is understood that prevailing winds in Washington are from the south and southeast. This being so, smoke or gases arising from the plant would be distributed over the areas upon which are located the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, the Smithsonian Institution, the new National Museum, the buildings of the Department of Agriculture, the White House propagating gardens and conservatories, and the tree growths of the Mall, and other valuable properties upon which the Government has expended great care and vast sums of money."

"The Commission strongly disapproves of the plans for this structure as submitted and views with grave anxiety the location of any such plant on this site."

THE NEWLANDS RESOLUTION

The Commission rendered its report to the Secretary of the Treasury on January 31, 1916. On January 29, Senator Francis G. Newlands, of Nevada, introduced Senate Joint Resolution 92, which provides that "inasmuch as the plans adopted for the construction of the central heating, lighting and power plant * * * on the site selected raise serious questions affecting the appearance of the city of Washington and the desirability of erecting said plant according to said plans, the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby directed to submit these plans to Congress, together with all reports; * * * and that no work upon the construction of said plant shall be commenced until the plans therefor have been approved by the President of the United States." This resolution was referred to the Committee on Library, of which Senator John Sharp Williams, of Mississippi, is Chairman.

At about this time the urgent deficiency bill, one of the great annual appropriation measures, was under consideration in the House and the Senate, and as it contained a paragraph making an additional appropriation for the proposed power plant, Senator Newlands proposed an amendment to the same general effect as his joint resolution. The amendment was adopted by the Senate, but later, in joint conference, the House conferees refused to yield and the Senate conferees receded from their position. When Senator Newlands took up the conferees report on the floor of the Senate a long and earnest debate ensued and many Senators showed that they favored the object of the amendment, even

though they did not feel justified in imperiling the fate of many important matters agreed upon in conference, by voting to reject the conferees report. The report being accepted, the Senate passed the bill without the amendment on February 14, and the House took similar action February 15.

PUBLIC OPPOSITION

Immediately following the introduction of the Newlands resolution, the Committee of One Hundred, a committee of citizens of Washington, organized for the purpose of furthering the Park Commission plan, filed its protest. The American Federation of Arts, comprising 210 Chapters with an aggregate membership of over 200,000 throughout the United States, recorded its opposition.

The American Institute of Consulting Engineers offered its assistance to the American Institute of Architects and appointed a committee consisting of W. J. Wilgus, formerly Vice-President and Chief Engineer of the New York Central Railroad; Dr. E. R. Corthell, President of the American Society of Civil Engineers; C. R. Ingersoll, formerly Chief Engineer of the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad; Reginald Pelham Bolton, mechanical engineer and specialist in steam plants; Ralph Mershon, formerly President of the American Society of Electrical Engineers, and C. R. Leavitt, Landscape Engineer. This Committee at once visited Washington and made a preliminary investigation on the ground.

On February 1, the officers of the American Institute of Architects were first made aware of the situation. Telegrams were immediately sent to the Presidents of its thirty-nine chapters, in response to which letters and telegrams of protest were forwarded to members of the House and Senate.

On February 3 the Chamber of Commerce of New York at its annual meeting adopted resolutions of protest and on the same day the Merchants' Association of New York addressed a strong protest to Senators and Representatives. Similar action was taken by the Boston Chamber of Commerce, and the Association of Commerce, the Board of Trade, the Industrial Club and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Newspapers in many of the principal cities expressed strong disapproval in their editorial columns.

CONFERENCE WITH THE PRESIDENT

On February 7, the President and Secretary of the American Institute of Architects accompanied by a member of the American Institute of Consulting Engineers, introduced by Senator Newlands, called upon President Wilson to lay the facts before him. The President stated that he had no previous knowledge of the matter and expressed grave concern, and promised to give it his immediate and careful consideration. Two days thereafter, having completed his consideration, but without conference with the Commission of Fine Arts, the President in a letter to Senator Martin stated that he saw no objection either to the site or to the erection of the building upon it.

On February 7 the officers of the Institute accompanied by the committee representing the American Institute of Consulting Engineers, called upon Senator Martin, Chairman of the Senate Conference Committee on the urgent deficiency bill, and presented arguments for delay and reconsideration. The officers of the Institute also called upon Chairman Fitzgerald of the House Conference Committee to offer their protests and plead for delay and reconsideration, but made no progress because of resentment shown by Mr. Fitzgerald at the eleventh hour objections. His viewpoint was that the matter had been public for three years and now that the contract was let, it was useless to further discuss it.

THE ACTION OF CONGRESS

On the following day Senator Martin asked Senator Newlands whether it would be agreeable to him for Mr. Martin to offer to the Conference Committee a modification of Mr. Newlands amendment, providing that the appropriation should become available, when the Commission of Fine Arts and the Secretary of the Treasury had agreed upon a site and the same had been approved by the President of the United States. Senator Newlands stated this would be acceptable and asked to have the form submitted in writing. On the following day when Senator Newlands asked for the form of the proposed modification, Mr. Martin withdrew his offer, saying that he had visited the site with the Secretary of the Treasury and he was convinced that it was thoroughly suitable and that his eyes were as good as those of any architect or engineer. The amendment therefore failed to pass and the work of excavation is proceeding.

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 92

The failure of the amendment to the urgent deficiency bill, leaves only Senator Newland's Senate Joint Resolution 92 now pending before Congress and the efforts of those who oppose the erection of the power house on the site chosen must be directed toward its early adoption, with such modification as will suit existing conditions. The measure will then come up uncomplicated by any other legislative act. It is believed, however, that the Treasury Department will continue its vigorous opposition to any change in the site, unless Congress or the President decide in favor of a reconsideration.

The Argument

No better summary of the arguments used by the adherents and opponents of the site in controversy could be collated than the following analysis of the brief issued by Hon. Wm. G. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury.

Use is made of the "deadly parallel" merely to bring into striking contrast these widely divergent views. As opponents of this particular site, or any site imperiling the realization of the ultimate Washington, we have endeavored to make no intemperate statements, nor any which we do not feel certain we can substantiate; and we submit the two sides to the impartial court of enlightened judgment without fear of the final verdict:

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY TO SENATOR MARTIN OF VIRGINIA.

February 7, 1916.

In compliance with your verbal request to Mr. M. S. Thompson, Superintendent of the Mechanical Engineering Division of the Supervising Architect's Office, I have the honor to give you the history of the Central Heating, Lighting and Power Plant authorized by the Sundry Civil Appropriation Act of 1914.

But before proceeding to a detailed history of the various legislative steps in connection with this project, I desire to call your attention to the following facts. By some agency unknown to me a persistent effort has been made throughout the country to arouse architects, engineers, civic bodies and the public generally against what is represented as an attempt to disfigure the natural beauties of Washington. False statements have been published throughout the country to the effect that this power plant is to be erected on the Mall at a point near the White House and Washington Monument. In brief, an audacious effort has been made to arouse resentment against this alleged effort to outrage the aesthetic sensibilities of the people of the country.

The fact is that the Central Heating, Lighting and Power Plant was authorized by the Congress for the express purpose of removing the objectionable conditions referred to.

It will, in fact, achieve that result. The power house will be located on an air line one mile and an eighth from the White House. Because of its lower elevation and the intervening embankment of the trunk line railroads and the structures of the old and new Bureau of Engraving and Printing, it will be invisible from the White House and the White House grounds. It will be invisible from the streets of the city, except in the immediate vicinity, and from the other Federal buildings in Washington and from the Capitol and any point on Pennsylvania Avenue. It will eventually result in the removal of the smoke stacks and chimneys of other Federal buildings and the smoke and gases arising from their individual and in many cases imperfect generating plants. The proposed power house will be equipped with modern smoke consuming apparatus which will absolutely do away with smoke nuisances at that point, thereby accomplishing the net result of eliminating the entire smoke nuisances so far as the Federal buildings are concerned.

It will not, however, remove the most conspicuous offenders against Washington's sky line, namely, the huge black iron stacks of the Potomac Electric Power Company, at 14th and B Streets, Northwest, which rise to an eleva-

THE CONCLUSIONS UPON WHICH LEADING EXPERT AUTHORITIES OF THE COUNTRY BASE THEIR OPPOSITION, NOT TO A CENTRAL PLANT, BUT TO THE SITE SELECTED.

Obviously the attempt to attribute improper motives to the public spirited citizens and National Organizations, which oppose the present site deserves no answer.

The attempt to arouse public sentiment against the location in controversy, herein termed "audacious," is but the exercise of the prerogative and duty of every good citizen.

If this be true, the desired result can be achieved equally well on another site which would be free from the objections which apply to this.

This statement is not conceded unless the word "it" is intended to refer to the building proper and not to the stacks. From the railroad embankment adjoining the site, which is approximately at the level of the boiler room floor, the Lincoln Memorial and the entire park area between it and the Washington Monument are in full and unobstructed view. From the terrace of the Capitol the stacks at least will be in full view. The accompanying photographs demonstrate that it will be the most conspicuous object in the view from the Island Park, from Arlington and the whole Virginia shore. It will stand at the Southern gateway to the city, both by river and by rail.

While these stacks have not been in use for a number of years and hence do not emit smoke and gas, they are an eyesore and should come down as soon as Congress acquires the site, which forms a part of the proposed park area.

tion of 200 feet between Pennsylvania Avenue and the Mall. It will not, of course, eliminate or minimize the smoke nuisances from any commercial plants.

As I dictate this letter, I am looking from the south window of the Treasury Department, on the second floor, and I can see projecting over the top of the Department of Agriculture building a small part of the stack of the power plant of that building. It is hardly sufficient to be noticed from this point. That stack is on an elevation considerably higher than the point where the power plant will be erected and is undoubtedly more conspicuous than will be the stacks from the power plant when built. I speak of this because it provides a very striking and reliable illustration of the point in controversy. And this stack together with the stack on the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, which is the largest of the executive group, will be removed when the central plant is in operation.

This is not relevant to the question of site, but will apply equally to another site.

It is pertinent, I believe, at this point, to invite your attention to an alternative proposition which at various times has been presented by the Potomac Electric Power Company in connection with its proposal to the Government to abandon its own Central Heating, Lighting and Power Plant and to make a ten-year contract with the said company. This proposal of the Potomac Electric Power Company contemplated the enlargement of its power plant at 14th and B Streets, Northwest. This company does not generate steam. It therefore proposed that, if the Government would abandon its own plant, the Potomac Company would install at the 14th and B Streets plant, a steam adjunct the initial cost of which it was stated would be $300,000.

The attitude of the Secretary of the Treasury toward the increase of the privately owned plant at 14th and B Streets must commend itself to all. No disinterested person will, we think, oppose the Government's plan to provide adequately for the heating and lighting of the public buildings through a central plant but we contend that this can be done even more adequately on another site. Consideration of the alternative proposition of the local lighting company is therefore not pertinent to the argument as to site.

If the plans for the further beautification of Washington, which for several years have been under consideration, are carried into effect, that section of the city in which the Potomac Electric Power Company's plant is situated would have to be taken over by the Government, whereupon the Government would be obliged to pay for this plant and the additional investment which would be made at that point for supplying the Federal buildings with steam.

An excellent reason why this alternative proposition should not be considered, and why the Government should acquire the property before further improvements are made upon it.

I am not unmindful of the strong protests that have been made to Congress and to the Secretary of the Treasury against the disfigurement of Washington. If such a thing were in contemplation it should and would justify the resentment and the rebuke of the whole country and my voice would be raised in protest against any such action.

Why, then, has the deliberate judgment of the Government's constituted professional advisers, the Commission of Fine Arts, been set aside?

But nothing of this character has been contemplated, and it is a matter of sincere regret that patriotic and well meaning citizens all over the country have, without any investigation on their part and upon false information, been misled into believing that Congress and the Secretary of the Treasury are seeking to establish a distressing blot upon the face of the national capital, which in fact and in truth, they are merely striving to remove.

Patriotic citizens will not believe that the deliberate judgment of the Commission of Fine Arts has misled them by false statements.

An act of Congress of April 28, 1904, directed the late Bernard R. Green, then Superintendent of the Library Building and Grounds, to submit at the next session of Congress preliminary plans and estimates of cost of the location, construction and equipment of a power house for furnishing heat and electric power to the existing and projected Government buildings on the Mall and in the vicinity of the White House. Under date of January 9, 1905, Mr. Green submitted to the Speaker of the House of Representatives his report, which was referred to the

The reports of these Commissions are confined to economic and scientific considerations and no reference can therein be found to the relation of the power plant to the Park Development project.

House Committee on Appropriations, and has been printed as House Document No. 205. Mr. Green in his report to Congress enthusiastically recommended the construction of a central plant to supply the Government buildings west of the Post Office Department, known as the "Executive Group," and suggested three sites for the location of the power plant: (1) At 14th and B Streets on the Mall; (2) opposite the old Bureau of Engraving and Printing Building; and (3) on Water Street at the foot of 14th Street, on the south side of the railroad tracks, the latter being the site on which the Central Heating, Lighting and Power Plant is now being erected.

No action was taken by Congress on Mr. Green's report. The matter of a central plant for the Executive Group of buildings lay dormant until May 1, 1911, when Secretary of the Treasury MacVeagh appointed a committee consisting of Nelson S. Thompson, Chief Mechanical and Electrical Engineer of the Supervising Architect's Office, Captain C. A. McAllister, Engineer in Chief of the Coast Guard, and R. H. Chappell, Superintendent of Machinery of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing, to consider and report on plans for a central heating, lighting and power plant to serve a designated number of buildings in the Executive Group. Under date of June 1, 1911, the Committee was able to submit a report to Secretary MacVeagh for the construction of a plant with a power house located at the present site. Secretary MacVeagh reported the matter to Congress in December, 1911, after having presented the committee's report to President Taft and the Cabinet. A vote of thanks was given by the President and the Cabinet to the Treasury Departments committee.

The Appropriations Committee of the House discussed the matter very fully with Secretary MacVeagh's committee, and as a result directed that a further study be made of the project with a view to enlarging its scope and taking in additional buildings. A second report was submitted to the Secretary of the Treasury in the summer of 1912, and was transmitted to Congress by the Secretary. Hearings on this report were held before the House Committee on Appropriations, and as a result Congress on June 23, 1913, authorized and directed the construction of a Central Heating, Lighting and Power Plant on the present site. After full hearings, the best proposal that could be obtained from the Potomac Electric Power Company was rejected, because it was clear that a considerable saving would be made for the Government by proceeding with the power plant.

The Act authorized the employment of experts outside of the Treasury Department, and in order to give the matter the most careful consideration, the firm of L. B. Stillwell and Company, engineers, of New York City, was employed by the Treasury Department to check up the Treasury committee's report. This firm worked on the project for approximately a year, and with one change only, which was of minor importance, concurred with the Treasury Department committee's report. This firm of engineers also prepared the plans and specifications upon which proposals were received and the contract awarded for the plant.

Mr. Stillwell testified before the Library Committee of the Senate that: "As to the site, expressing my personal opinion of the matter—and I am glad to have an opportunity to do so—I think this whole matter has been approached here in a way that could not be expected to attain the best economical results. For instance, one of the first things that suggested itself to us when we came here was why build a new plant? Why not extend the existing plant? Of course, the present plant is farther away from the buildings which are to be heated, and it is possible that were we to figure out the losses in transmitting the steam, we might reach the conclusion that it was unwise to transmit it so far. That problem so far as I know, has never been investigated. It certainly has not been by my associates or myself. * * * As an engineer, I think this problem should be studied on broad lines—on lines as broad as those which have been applied by the Arts Commission in its work—and that the whole problem of the supply of electricity for lighting and power purposes and of heating from central stations—if that be the best way—should be laid out now on a plan which can be substantially

A contract for the erection and completion of the Central Heating, Lighting and Power Plant was awarded December 24, 1915, to W. G. Cornell Company, of Washington and New York; and work was immediately started and is now in progress.

Shortly after the award of the contract, the attention of the Treasury Department was called to the fact that the drawings and specifications for the power house structure had not been submitted to the Fine Arts Commission, as required by President Wilson's executive order. This oversight was due to the former Supervising Architect and the firm of engineers hereinbefore referred to, who were handling the project independent of the regular business of the Supervising Architect's Office, and kept the files on the subject independent of the regular office files. These files were not distributed into the regular office files until a few days after the award of the contract for the construction of the plant, and about the time that L. B. Stillwell and Company's connection with the project was terminated by the Department. The information that the executive order had not been complied with came as a surprise to the Department, and immediate steps were taken to submit to the Fine Arts Commission the plans and specifications.

The Commission objected first to the smoke stacks. At the meetings held before the Senate Library Committee they objected not only to the smoke stacks, but the construction of the plant on this or any other site, and suggested an impracticable alternate—the enlargement of the Capitol Power Plant, located in Garfield Park, sufficiently to serve the buildings named in the Sundry Civil Act. An estimate of the cost of enlarging the Capitol Power Plant to accomplish this object is approximately $1,463,757 (or $4,653 more than the cost of building the new plant) and the project would have many objectionable features. From the engineering side, it would necessitate the transmission of steam 3.4 miles and would burden a plant designed to care only for the legislative activities of the Government.

It can readily be demonstrated mathematically that the smoke stacks of the new power plant will not be visible from 99 per cent of the view points referred to by the Fine Arts Commission. I transmit herewith a drawing, with the statement that an observer stationed at any point within the shaded area will be unable to see even the stacks of the new plant.

I transmit also a number of photographs taken at and adjacent to the site of the power plant, showing the condition now existing there. These photographs show the various lumber wharves, coal wharves, railroad sidings, railroad tracks, and in general the character of the surroundings of the selected site. I call your particular attention to the large photograph in which the artist has depicted to actual scale the new power plant building in its exact location. This view is taken from the top of adhered to for the next 50 or 100 years. The development ought to be systematic and symmetrical in respect of power supply as in respect of architectural development.

Now, as to the plant that has been contracted for, the Department has found it necessary to omit a considerable amount of apparatus from its specifications as they were approved by my associate, Mr. Putnam, who represented me here. Unless those omissions are replaced in the near future the plant, in my judgment, would be better left unbuilt. It is presumably the intention of the Department to make this replacement in whole or in part so as to make the plant an operative plant."

There is grave doubt as to the legality of this contract which was awarded in contravention of the Executive Order which requires submission of plans to the Commission of Fine Arts before final action, but even if legal, little loss would result from an early change of site.

There is no desire to attribute the failure to submit the design to the Commission of Fine Arts to anything other than an inadvertence but the public should not be deprived, by an inadvertence, of the judgment of its legally constituted safeguards, the Commission of Fine Arts.

This is the actual statement of the Art Commission's report: "The Commission strongly disapprove of the plans for this structure as submitted and view with grave anxiety the location of any such plant on this site."

Many eminent engineers differ from this view.

In the absence of the drawings referred to, the accompanying photographs taken from points in the parks will prove illuminating. The balloon shows the location and height of the stacks.

It is this condition which makes it difficult for one lacking imagination to visualize the future development of this district. It is now a slum district, which, as has been well said, is a district in which people are permitted to be disorderly and unclean. There is no place in a modern city, least of all in the Capital of the nation, for such a district. No more effective barrier could be erected against the conversion of this squalid section into a water front development in which utility and beauty are combined, as contem-

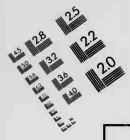
Showing How the Smokestacks of the Proposed Government Central Heating and Lighting Plant will Disfigure the View of Washington from Points in Potomac Park

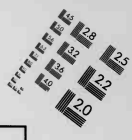
From the north end of the Highway Bridge. The two smokestacks of the proposed power plant (ultimately to be four) will dominate the entire sky line as it appears in the right of the picture.

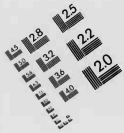
The view of the Capitol from many points in Potomac Park and Riverside Drive will be secondary to that of the immense columns (16 feet in diameter) of the stacks. The height of the smokestacks is indicated by the balloon raised over the site of the plant on the Washington Channel near Fourteenth Street.

REDUCTION RATIO 13:1

PM-MGP
METRIC GENERAL PURPOSE TARGET
PHOTOGRAPHIC

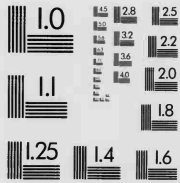


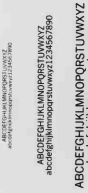


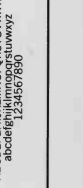


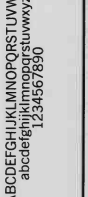
150 mm

100 mm









1.0 mm

1.5 mm

2.0 mm

2.5 mm

A5

A4

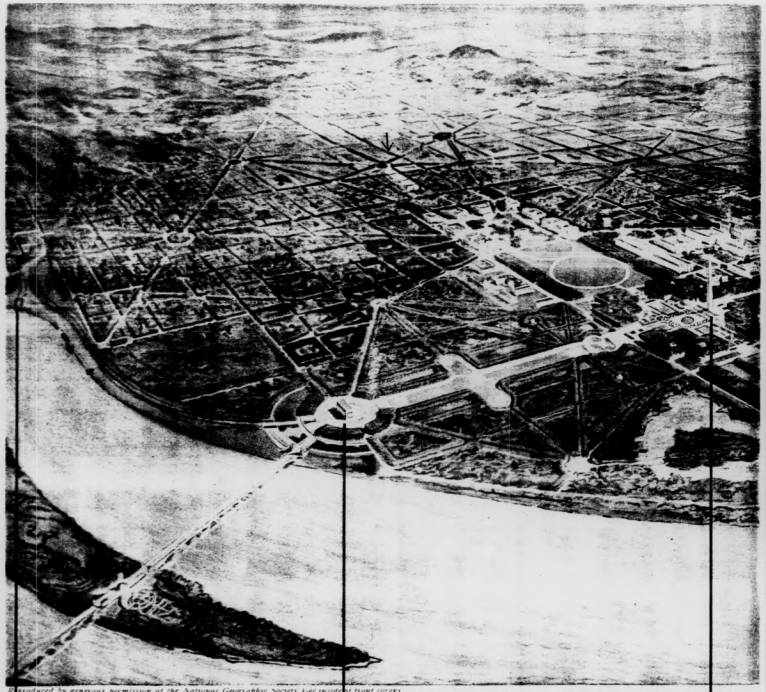
PRECISION[SM] RESOLUTION TARGETS

A&P International
2715 Upper Afton Road, St. Paul, MN 55119-4760
612/738-9329 FAX 612/738-1496

The Erection of the Proposed Power Plant on the Site Designated Will Permanently Disfigure the Natic

The great cities and capitals of the world have spent millions in acquiring and improving their water-fronts for the combined uses of business and pleasure. The water-front of Washington already belongs to the Government, and may be improved at small expense compared with what such improvements have cost other cities.

It is now proposed to erect a Power House, 90 feet in height, with smoke-stacks towering high above it, and an asphalt plant, on the water-front, only 300 feet from the people's play park.



Reproduced by generous permission of the National Geographic Society (see inside of front cover)

THE PARK COMMISSION PLAN

The plan laid out by the Commission of 1901 for the national capital of the future is being surely, if very slowly realized. That plan is here pictured. The magnificent memorial to Lincoln, which ultimately will be connected with Arlington by a great memorial bridge typifying the reunion of the North and the South, is under construction at the river end of the great parkway, which stretches for a distance of two and two thirds miles from the Library of Congress to the Potomac River. To the west of the White Lot are the Pan American Union Building, the Continental Hall of the D. A. R., and the American Red Cross Building under construction, all fitting into the plan. Between the Washington Monument and the

Mouth of Rock Creek. Plans for a boulevard connection between Potomac and Rock Creek Parks are now before Congress.

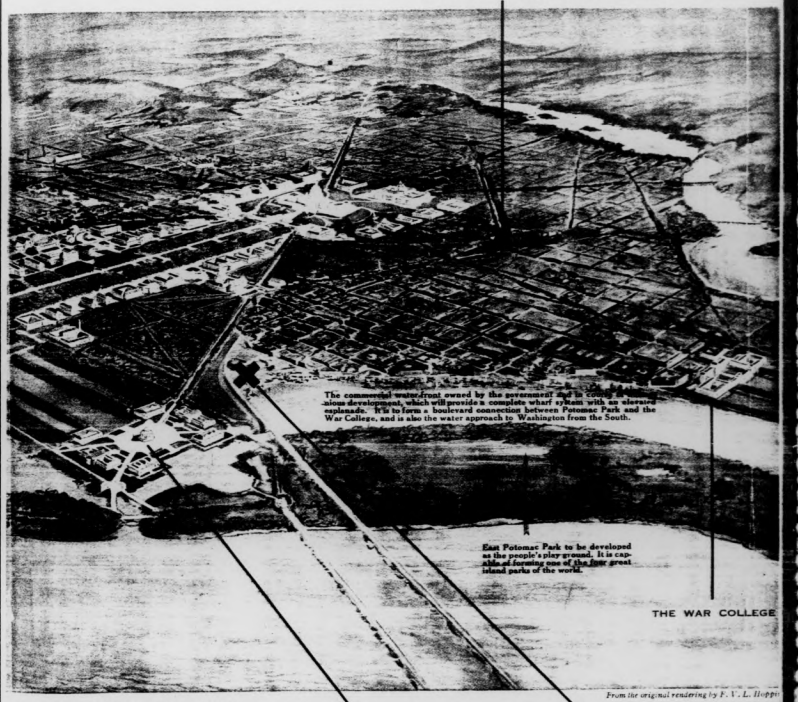
Here the Lincoln Memorial is approaching completion!
Here the Nation will commemorate the life and the service of that gentle and courageous Captain.

Here rises the Washington
The world knows no mc
memory of a man!
Unadorned — simple — m.
precious symbols ever bequea

's Capitol, in the Construction and Beautification of Which, Nearly $100,000,000.00 Have Been Expended

The Nation that caused this park and riverside to be hallowed and consecrated with monuments which are destined to be an inspiration to millions of American citizens will never forgive any desecration!

An enlargement of the present Capitol Power Plant would serve every purpose now sought and would also accommodate, in addition to the buildings it is proposed to heat from the above-mentioned new Power House, the Navy Yard, War College, Government Printing Office, New Post Office, Pension Bureau, Patent Office and the Land Office. The line points to the site of the present Capitol Power House.


The commercial water-front owned by the government and is to be developed along similar lines, which will provide a complete wharf system with an adjoining esplanade. It is to form a boulevard connection between Potomac Park and the War College, and is also the water approach to Washington from the South.
East Potomac Park to be developed as the people's play ground. It is capable of forming one of the finest great inland parks of the world.
THE WAR COLLEGE

From the original rendering by F. V. L. Hoppi

OF THE ULTIMATE WASHINGTON

Harbor stands the new Bureau of Engraving and Printing Building, also a part of the plan of 1901. The Department of Agriculture Building and the National Museum face the Mall a it is to be. Flanking the Capitol on either side are the beautiful office buildings of the Senate and House of Representatives, and north of the Capitol are the Union Station and th Washington Post Office — all steps forward in the attainment of the Ideal Washington. The home of the National Geographic Society is indicated by the arrow in the center o the left half of the picture.

Monument!
re inspiring tribute to the
estic — one of the most
hed to a nation.

Reserved — under the Plan for Washington — as the only site left in the National Capital for a great memorial. It is nearly on the axis of the White House and the Washington Monument. Congress will some day dedicate it to a great national memorial. The proposed Power House would render this spot valueless for that purpose.

This is the Site
of the
Proposed Power Plant

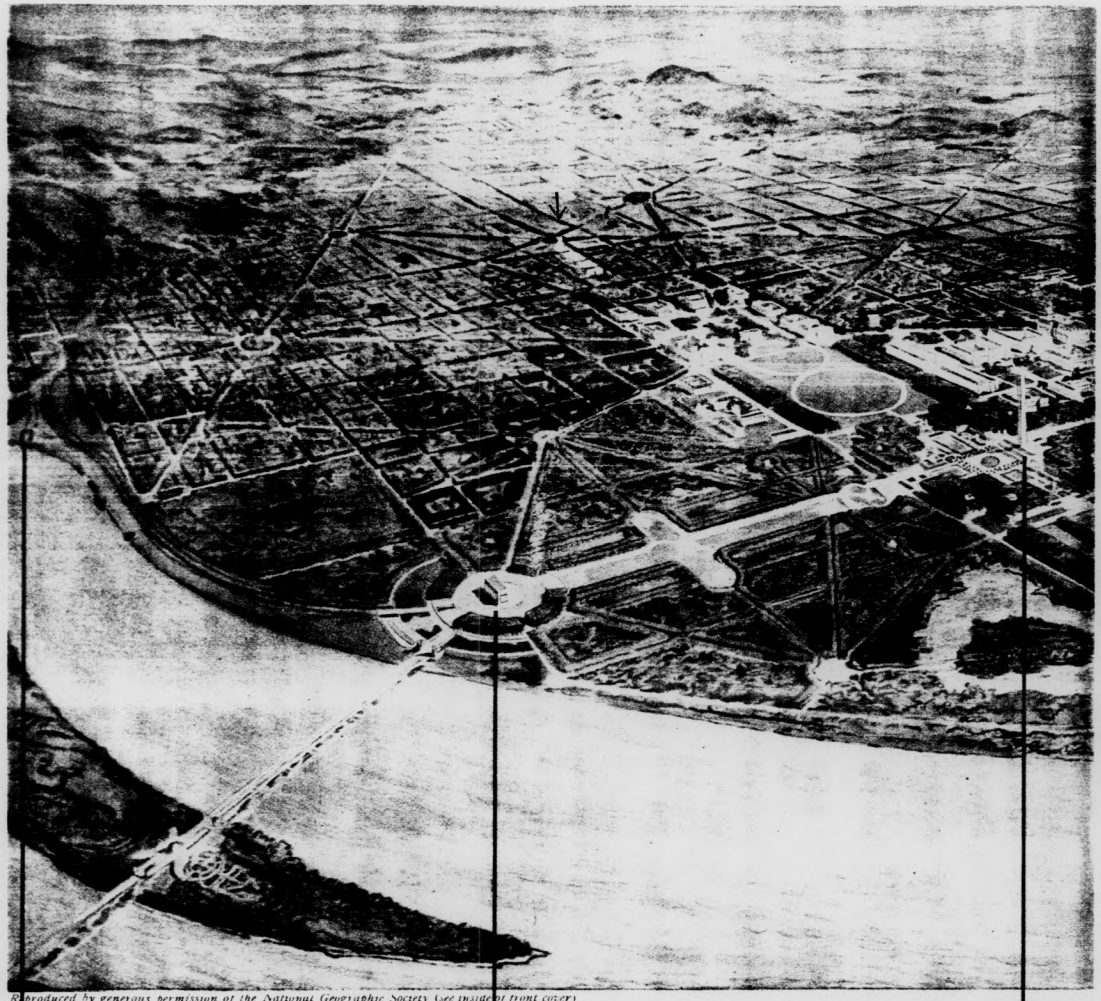
REDUCTION RATIO 9:1

100 mm
A5
1.0
1.1
1.25
1.4
1.6
1.8
2.0
2.2
2.5
2.8
3.2
3.6
4.0
4.5
5.0
5.6
6.3
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890
1.0 mm
1.5 mm
2.0 mm

The Erection of the Proposed Power Plant on the Site Designated Will Permanently Disfigure the Natic

The great cities and capitals of the world have spent millions in acquiring and improving their water-fronts for the combined uses of business and pleasure. The water-front of Washington already belongs to the Government, and may be improved at small expense compared with what such improvements have cost other cities.

It is now proposed to erect a Power House, 90 feet in height, with smoke-stacks towering high above it, and an asphalt plant, on the water-front, only 300 feet from the people's play park.



Reproduced by generous permission of the National Geographic Society (see inside of front cover)

THE PARK COMMISSION PLAN

The plan laid out by the Commission of 1901 for the national capital of the future is being surely, if very slowly realized. That plan is here pictured. The magnificent memorial to Lincoln, which ultimately will be connected with Arlington by a great memorial bridge typifying the reunion of the North and the South, is under construction at the river end of the great parkway, which stretches for a distance of two and two-thirds miles from the Library of Congress to the Potomac River. To the west of the White Lot are the Pan-American Union Building, the Continental Hall of the D. A. R., and the American Red Cross Building under construction, all fitting into the plan. Between the Washington Monument and the

Mouth of Rock Creek. Plans for a boulevard connection between Potomac and Rock Creek Parks are now before Congress.

Here the Lincoln Memorial is approaching completion!

Here the Nation will commemorate the life and the service of that gentle and courageous Captain.

Here rises the Washington Monument!

The world knows no mc memory of a man!

Unadorned — simple — m precious symbols ever bequea

's Capitol, in the Construction and Beautific

The Nation that caused this park and riv hallowed and consecrated with monuments destined to be an inspiration to millions o citizens will never forgive any desecration!

OF THE ULTIMATE WASHINGTON

Harbor stands the new Bureau of Engraving and Printing Building it is to be. Flanking the Capitol on either side are the beautiful Washington Post Office — all steps forward in the attainment of the left half of the picture.

re inspiring tribute to the

jestic — one of the most hed to a nation.

Reserved — u only site left in t It is nearly on Washington M cate it to a great House would re

ignated Will Permanently Disfigure the Natic

ow proposed to erect a Power House, 90 feet
, with smoke-stacks towering high above it,
asphalt plant, on the water-front, only 300 feet
people's play park.

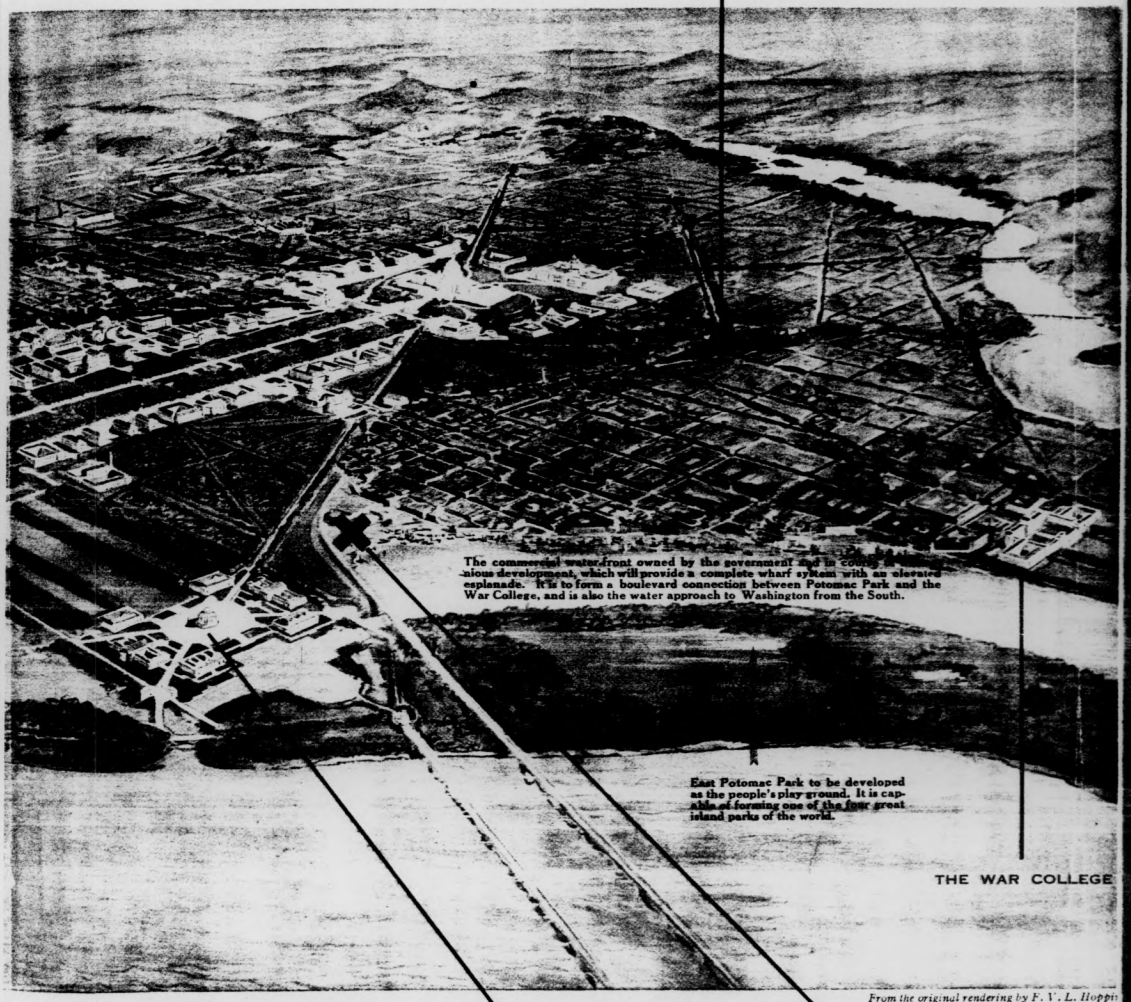
's Capitol, in the Construction and Beautification of Which, Nearly $100,000,000.00 Have Been Expended

The Nation that caused this park and riverside to be hallowed and consecrated with monuments which are destined to be an inspiration to millions of American citizens will never forgive any desecration!

An enlargement of the present Capitol Power Plant would serve every purpose now sought and would also accommodate, in addition to the buildings it is proposed to heat from the above-mentioned new Power House, the Navy Yard, War College, Government Printing Office, New Post Office, Pension Bureau, Patent Office and the Land Office. The line points to the site of the present Capitol Power House.

THE PARK COMMISSION PLAN

lowly realized. That plan is here pictured. The magnificen memorial
ion of the North and the South, is under construction at the river end of
he Potomac River. To the west of the White Lot are the Pan-American
n, all fitting into the plan. Between the Washington Monument and the


The commercial water-front owned by the government and in course of
nious development, which will provide a complete wharf system with an elevated
esplanade. It is to form a boulevard connection between Potomac Park and the
War College, and is also the water approach to Washington from the South.
East Potomac Park to be developed
as the people's play-ground. It is cap-
able of forming one of the four great
island parks of the world.
THE WAR COLLEGE

From the original rendering by F. V. L. Hoppi

OF THE ULTIMATE WASHINGTON

Harbor stands the new Bureau of Engraving and Printing Building, also a part of the plan of 1901. The Department of Agriculture Building and the National Museum face the Mall a
it is to be. Flanking the Capitol on either side are the beautiful office buildings of the Senate and House of Representatives, and north of the Capitol are the Union Station and th
Washington Post Office—all steps forward in the attainment of the Ideal Washington. The home of the National Geographic Society is indicated by the arrow in the center o
the left half of the picture.

ng completion!
e life and the
in.

Here rises the Washington Monument!

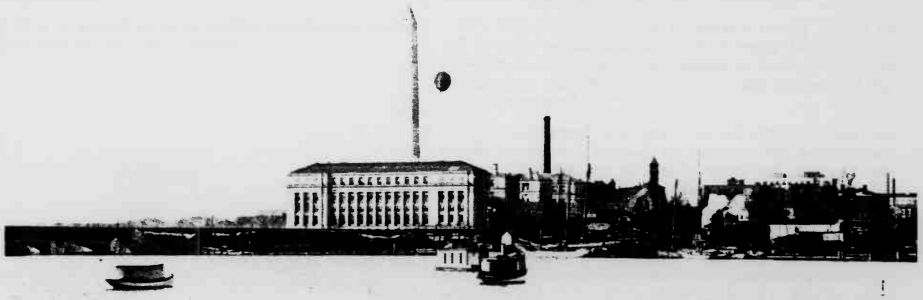
The world knows no mc re inspiring tribute to the memory of a man!

Unadorned — simple — m jestic — one of the most precious symbols ever bequea hed to a nation.

Reserved — under the Plan for Washington — as the only site left in the National Capital for a great memorial. It is nearly on the axis of the White House and the Washington Monument. Congress will some day dedicate it to a great national memorial. The proposed Power House would render this spot valueless for that purpose.

This is the Site of the Proposed Power Plant

Showing How the Smokestacks of the Proposed Government Central Heating and Lighting Plant will Disfigure the Water-Front View of Washington



The balloon was raised by representatives of the Treasury Department from the site of the proposed Central Power Plant on the Washington Channel at Fourteenth Street. It indicates the height and position of the smoke stacks (16 feet in diameter). The building in the immediate background is the Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

The picture was taken from the north side of Potomac Park looking towards the Washington Monument. The two smokestacks of the power plant (ultimately to be four) will dominate the sky line from the Park and the Riverside Drive.

the Washington Monument, and it is interesting to note that the only point from which this photograph could be taken to show clearly the power house and its stack is the top of the Monument, approximately 550 feet above the city datum. It might be well to call your attention also to the fact that the height of the stacks as contracted for will be 175 feet above city datum, or practically 39 feet higher than the roof of the new Bureau of Engraving and Printing, and 30 feet higher than the roof of the old Bureau of Engraving and Printing.

I transmit also a large map of the city of Washington, on which are shown buildings having independent plants, buildings served by the above, and the location of the new power plant. From this map it will be seen that by extending the tunnel of the old Post Office Building 1,500 feet it will be possible to connect to the central plant now serving the Interior Department and its attendant group of buildings, and thus shut down that plant; it will also be possible by a tunnel 1,700 feet long to connect the Naval Hospital and the Hygienic Laboratory to the central plant; in short, the location of the plant is ideal to serve the entire number of present and future executive buildings.

The selection of this particular site for the new power house was dictated by the A, B, C's of mechanical and electrical engineering:

(1) It is so placed as to be readily and cheaply served with coal both by rail and by water.

(2) The ashes (one of the most embarrassing features connected with a central plant) can be cheaply and readily removed by rail, water or cars.

(3) Condensing water in large volumes is available within a few feet, and can be handled with the minimum expense for pumping.

(4) The plant is fairly within the center of gravity of the load. It is within 800 feet of the buildings that will take 50 per cent of all the steam generated and nearly 40 per cent of all the electricity generated. The greater portion of the buildings to be served are relatively small consumers.

plated by the Park Commission plan and as exemplified in European cities, than a power house erected at this point.

(The answers to the following nine points were prepared by Messrs. Wilgus and Bolton of the Committee of the American Institute of Consulting Engineers.)

(1) The power plant can be equally readily served by rail at other points, and the merit of water delivery is insufficient to offset the serious damage to the beautifying of Washington, and the preservation of the water-front for esthetic treatment.

It is understood also that it is not expected that the supply of coal will be made by water, as rail facilities are greater. The delivery of coal by water will involve hoisting apparatus exterior to the station, which will probably extend above the roof of the power house.

(2) The same answer as to No. 1, applies to this matter of the removal of ashes, namely: that they can be removed with equal convenience, even if at somewhat greater expense, by rail, if the power plant be placed at another point away from the water front.

(3) Condensing water in large volume is desirable for the economical production of electric energy, but in a plant of the probable proportions of that proposed, it is not a very large element of cost; thus the difference between the operation of condensing engines and non-condensing engines might probably be, per one million kilowatt hours of energy, approximately $3,000 in favor of the condensing process. This amount is reducible by the fixed charges upon the extra cost of apparatus designed for condensing purposes.

Further, in a combined heating and power plant it is questionable whether the condensing process would have much value, as the use of exhausted steam could be made available for heating purposes. A further point in this connection is the probable effect of the heated circulating water of so large a plant upon the shallow waters of the Island Park.

(4) Mr. Jennings' analysis of the distribution of the buildings from the present Capitol plant would appear to contradict this statement. An examination of the map indicates the correctness of Mr. Jennings' conclusions, and our observation of the locality on the occasion of our recent visit, leads us to the same opinion. So far as the question of the distribution of heat from the Capitol plant is concerned, there is no reason why the distribution of steam or

(5) The central plant is located on the commercial water front instead of on the Mall, on property owned by the Government, at the least conspicuous place in the city of Washington for such a project, and its construction will be a great step toward beautifying that section of the city. The building will be almost entirely hidden from view by the high railroad embankment at this point and the buildings of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing. The location satisfies the aesthetic feelings of all reasonable men.

(6) When the power plant is in operation it will permit the removal of the present stacks of the Bureau of Engraving and Printing and of the Department of Agriculture.

(7) The central plant will effect an annual saving to the Government, considering existing buildings only as named in the Act, of $177,000. If Congress permits the addition of the Office Building for the Interior Department, the Red Cross Building, the Johnson-Walker Building (known as the Navy Annex), and the Lincoln Memorial, a further saving of $40,000 per annum will be effected. When the three great departmental buildings named in the Act are completed and occupied, a further saving of $45,000 will be effected. In other words, the greater the load, both electric and steam, that is added to the plant, the greater will be the saving owing to the lower cost of production per unit of steam and electricity.

(8) The plant has been designed so that with little expense it may form the necessary steam auxiliary to the hydroelectric plant which, it is safe to say, will be built to harness the Great Falls of the Potomac.

(9) The plant will eliminate from the city of Washington seventeen smoke stacks now existing on Federal buildings, which discharge smoke and gases from their individual plants.

hot water for heating purposes should not be made up to distances even so great as 18,000 feet. This is evident, because the grouping of the Federal buildings around the Mall and Park lends itself to a circuit or ring system of heating mains, feeding both ways.

The carriage of heat for such distances can be effected in one of several manners. It is not necessary to assume that steam must be conveyed in a single main the whole distance, with accompanying losses of pressure, because supplemental supply at high pressure can be conveyed in auxiliary high-pressure piping parallelling the main supplies. If planned in this manner, subsurface pipe system need not involve very large proportions.

(5) To all the assertions made in this paragraph, we as engineers, take exception. Our observations of the location contradict the assertions that the building will be almost entirely hidden from view.

(6) This statement is doubtless correct, but constitutes no reason why greater nuisances or objectionable interferences with the appearance of the Park area should be substituted for existing nuisances. It may be also remarked that the same beneficial effects can be attributed to the power plant when located in any other position.

(7) It would seem reasonable to assume that some saving in existing operating costs of individual heating plants can be effected by the proposed concentration.

It does not seem to be intended that the existing Capitol plant shall be discontinued, consequently the second plant will be operated with unnecessary duplication of labor and overhead cost. Increased savings, due to increased load factor would apply very much more directly to the complete concentration of the whole of the work in one plant, than it would to the two plants.

(8) The use of this plant in this particular position as a future steam auxiliary to a future hydro-electric transmission system, is doubtless practicable, but the same statement is equally true of the Capitol power plant, or of the new plant, if placed at some other location.

(9) There would be little advantage in the new plant if it did not eliminate, as the Secretary states, the existing plants in various Federal buildings, but that is no reason why there should be substituted for widely scattered and comparatively inconspicuous nuisances, a concentrated and conspicuous nuisance, at the proposed location. The same beneficial result can be secured by the location of the plant elsewhere."

Is it unreasonable to ask a suspension of construction work pending an investigation by qualified experts?

Is it your wish that your legislators should blindly push forward this work over the protests of your legally constituted advisors—the Commission of Fine Arts?

Do you believe that because a contract has been signed (either legally or in defiance of the law) a mistake can not be rectified?

The Commission of Fine Arts is the only legally constituted safeguard of *your* interest in the wealth of beauty which adorns your Nation's Capital—shall its protest go unheeded?

It is for *you* to say.

"Quod erat demonstrandum."

CONGRESSIONAL OPINION

SENATOR NEWLANDS:

The lovers of beauty in this country are increasing every day. There are people in this country who realize that art belongs to civilization, not to barbarism. They propose that this shall be a civilized country and not a barbaric country. They are organizing art commissions in every State, with greater or less control over public and private structures. They are organizing societies throughout the entire country for the purpose of engaging in a propaganda regarding the artistic development of the country. They propose to revive that artistic taste which existed among the gentlemen of colonial times, exemplified by devotion to the correct standards of art of such men as Washington and Jefferson; Washington, who made it a labor of love to stand side by side with the great French engineer, L'Enfant, in the planning of this city; Jefferson, whose solicitude regarding art is expressed in hundreds of letters and public utterances, who, whilst our representative in France, was so solicitous regarding the construction of a penitentiary in the State of Virginia that he requested delay in order that he might look at the best standards of art in France regarding the construction of even such a structure, and who later on practically planned the great University of Virginia, which has stood a model of beauty ever since. Jefferson, who when the State of Virginia was considering the construction of a capitol urged delay until the best plans could be secured, and who, in a letter from France to one charged with responsibility in Virginia, declared with reference to objection as to loss of time—I quote from him:

"The loss of time should not be weighed against the saving of money, which will arise, against the comfort of laying out the public money for something honorable, the satisfaction of seeing an object and proof of national good taste, and the regret and mortification of erecting a monument to our barbarism, which will be loaded with execrations as long as it shall endure."

I appeal to the Senators who represent the great Commonwealth of Virginia, so worthily represented in the councils of state by the great Jefferson, to bear in mind these words and to save themselves "the regret and mortification of erecting a monument to our barbarism, which will be loaded with execrations as long as it shall endure."

You may rest assured that that structure, with its two stacks, ultimately to be four, towering in the air will arrest the attention of every lover of beauty from the Old World who comes to the Capital and views them within sight of the monument erected to Washington, of the temple erected to the great Lincoln, and of the great temples which, I trust, will before long be erected to Jefferson and to Hamilton. I appeal to the Senators from Virginia to see that this act of barbarism is not committed. This structure will be torn down before many years. The relentless movement of the artistic sense of the country will in the end control, and the temporary judgment of this hour will not stand against it.

Mr. President, I trust that this body will be conscious of its own dignity; will be conscious of its right to change its mind, of its right to adopt the processes by which its mind can be informed, and of adopting methods which in the future will secure perpetual harmony in the plans of Washington instead of chaos and discord.

* * * * * * * *

As one distinguished engineer said before the Library Committee, the engineers are learning something by experience. He said that whereas they used to determine all these questions as matters of mathematics and economics, they are learning the value of calling in the artists in collaboration with them, and they are pursuing that course more and more, because their works thus planned present a very much better appearance to the eye, give future generations some idea of the culture of the time, and often result, through the suggestions of these architects—who are also great constructors and administrators—in means of economy in the practical work itself.

There was a time in the history of the country when legislators were disposed to regard the artists with as much contempt as they did "these literary fellows" to whom frequent allusions were in those times made in legislative bodies. That time has gone by. This country is realizing that the only permanent evidence to future generations of the culture of any period is the literature and the arts, and that it is the highest duty of every generation to hand down to future generations some evidence of the culture and refinement of the time.

This period existed in the early days of the Republic, when the mansions of the Virginia gentlemen graced the hills and mountains of Virginia. It has had a revival during the past 25 years in the various expositions that have been created—the exposition at Chicago, the exposition at St. Louis, and the exposition at San Francisco, the latter crowning them all in excellence. People are realizing the satisfaction which beauty gives in the common affairs of life, and their realization of this fact is increasing more and more. The artists and engineers, the professional men of creative imagination, and the professional men of mathematics and practical affairs, unite in asking us to suspend this work until competent judgment can be secured.

* * * * * * * *

I shall not weary the Senate with any further comments upon this matter beyond saying that the resolution which I originally offered, and from which this amendment originated, is still pending, and that resolution will be pressed with vigor in the future in case the action of the Senate should be adverse upon this subject. But I have hoped, from the interest which has been shown in this debate, that the Senate will do as any business man would do under similar circumstances when his attention was called to great architectural and engineering difficulties in connection with a proposed structure—pause for a moment, *until the best expert advice can be secured.* That is all this amendment asks for.

* * * * * * * *

SENATOR MARTINE OF NEW JERSEY:

It occurs to me, however, that inasmuch as the construction of this building is so entirely in embryo, it is surely within our right, and, I believe, within the lines of good sense and in accordance with justice to take some step which shall prevent its further progress.

SENATOR MARTIN OF VIRGINIA:

I will say to the Senate that I shall be very glad if every Senator on this floor will go and view in person the locality where it is proposed to erect this building. I am sure that it would not take 10 minutes to satisfy those who visit the locality that what has been done has been wisely done and ought to be promptly proceeded with.

* * * * * * * *

The banks of the Potomac River will really be beautified by a splendid building which is going to be erected and by *two beautiful smokestacks.*

* * * * * * * *

There are very few artists in the Senate. My friend from Nevada is an artist, and I say it in good faith. He has a high development of artistic taste. I have very little, but I have a practical turn. I can tell something about a suitable location for a smokestack when I look at it.

I say to you, Senators, if you have any doubt about it go there and look at it, and unless you are an artist you will be satisfied with it. If you are an artist, I will not vouch for any opinion about it.

* * * * * * * *

I do not minimize the ability and distinction of the Art Commission, but there are others. Wisdom will not die with them.

* * * * * * * *

They do not say that the design is not proper; they do not say the new building will be unsightly; *but they say it will injure the beauty of the city if located upon that site.* After hearing what the Senator has read, I repeat that the only objection made by the Fine Arts Commission is as to the location of this plant. Now, if the objection is only to *the location of the plant, what have they got to do with that?*

SENATOR NEWLANDS:

Mr. President, I wish to say, in connection with the statement just made by the Senator from Virginia, that if any one of the Senators goes to that particular spot, his first impression will be that the location is a favorable one with reference to the delivery of power and light; and, second, that the general squalor of the neighborhood is such as to make the proposed building an ornament rather than a detriment; but I wish every Senator who goes there to exercise his imagination and to view that water front, as it will be under the plans of the Burnham Commission, which contemplates making that water front, from the Bureau of Engraving and Printing down to the War College, a thing not only of the highest utility but a thing of the highest beauty. * * * Ultimately, if the plans of those artists and architects are not interfered with, we shall have a development there approaching in beauty the Thames embankment in London, the development of the Seine in Paris, and the incomparable development of the Rhine at Dusseldorf, which has transformed that city, originally a Pittsburgh, clouded in smoke and dirt, into one of the most beautiful cities of the world, where the water front has become the point of central interest, although it is not devoted simply to beauty, but is dedicated to utility in the highest degree, every convenience being given for transshipment between boat and car, every mechanical device being utilized for the purpose of cheaply handling freight, and yet the whole thing done in such a way, by the union of engineering and architectural and landscape talent, as to present to the eye an impression of extreme beauty.

I ask every Senator who goes down there and looks at that place to imagine it as it will be, facing Potomac Park, that beautiful park between it and Virginia; that park which is to be highly developed in the future and which will be one of the features of Washington. I also ask Senators then to consider the question in the light of the fact that that point will be the gateway from the South to Washington, and that it is proposed to be defaced by the construction of a building with two stacks, and with possibly four stacks, in the ultimate development of the plans, of the monumental height of nearly 200 feet, and vying with the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial in attracting the eye—the two latter attracting the eye for their beauty and the former for its hideousness.

* * * * * * * *

"Questions of art!" Do not questions of art refer as much to the site as to the structure that is to be put upon it? Could there be any broader authority for an Executive Order to be made by the President with reference to supervision, not only of the structures themselves but of the sites of public buildings in the District of Columbia.

REPRESENTATIVE COOPER OF WISCONSIN:

Secretary McAdoo says that it is all right where it is to be located. The Commission of Fine Arts, *much more competent than he to judge,* say that it will be a blot upon the landscape.

* * * * * * * *

I have heard sneering references to this commission. It is only fair to say that they have as much right to speak, though not as much right to vote—but they have as much right to speak their views on this question as has any gentleman on this floor. They are American citizens, the city of Washington is their Capital as much as it is ours, and they are as much interested as we in seeing that nothing is built here which shall in anywise interfere with the harmonious development of the city or mar its architectural beauty. This commission was unanimous in condemning the plans and the location of this plant with these 200-foot smokestacks.

SENATOR MARTIN OF VIRGINIA:

The President of the United States has finally approved this location and these plans, and he says the work ought to go on right there and now, and ought to be completed as quickly as possible.

SENATOR NEWLANDS:

But the President has not had, as the law requires, the benefit of the opinion of the Commission of Fine Arts, nor has he had the benefit of the opinion of experts upon the subject. We appeal to the informed judgment of the President of the United States, and not to his judgment when only one side has been heard.

SENATOR MARTIN OF VIRGINIA:

Mr. President, they are simply *drawing on their imagination* and *making pictures,* but we are doing something. *We are beautifying that place by putting a magnificent structure there,* one that will be pleasing to the eye. There is nothing obnoxious to the eye in that building that is supposed to be put on the bank of the Potomac.

PROTESTS FROM ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

Extract from a letter from Mr. W. J. Wilgus, formerly First Vice-President of the N. Y. C. & H. R. R. R., and chairman of a Committee of the American Institute of Consulting Engineers, to Senator Martin of Virginia:

* * * * * * * *

An experience of many years with large problems of this nature, first as Vice-President of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad in the inception and construction of the Grand Central Terminal in New York City, and at other points in the East and Middle West, and later as Consulting Engineer in private practice, leads me to feel that the building of a power station directly in the forefront of the new Lincoln Memorial and surrounding grounds contiguous to the building of the Bureau of Printing and Engraving, and visible to a more or less extent from other public buildings and grounds, will be an irreparable and unnecessary injury to the future development of the Capital of the country, and one that will be deplored by the entire nation.

My associates on the Committee who join with me in this appeal are among the best-known engineers of the country. Mr. Ingersoll is a consulting engineer in private practice, and was formerly chief engineer of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad, and later chief engineer of the Bridge Department of the City of New York; Mr. Ralph D. Mershon, a widely known consulting electrical engineer, is a Past-President of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers; Mr. Charles W. Leavitt is probably the best known landscape architect and engineer in the country, and Mr. Reginald Pelham Bolton is a prominent consulting engineer in the heating and ventilating field.

I have given their records and my own somewhat in detail as indicating the breadth of experience which I hope will be taken as adding somewhat to the weight of our opinion that the best interests of the country will be served by a suspension of work on the power plant until the question of its site can be given a thorough investigation, with the object of placing it where no injury will be done to the effect that is expected to be produced by the millions of dollars that have been and are to be expended in the enhancement of the beauty of Washington.

Yours respectfully,

W. J. WILGUS,
Chairman, Committee of American Institute of Consulting Engineers.

FROM THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CONSULTING ENGINEERS.

WHEREAS, a site in the City of Washington has been purchased for, and the work actually started upon, a Government light, heat and power station on the waters of the Potomac River near the foot of 14th Street in plain view from Potomac and Island Parks, including the new Lincoln memorial and the proposed new memorial bridge across the Potomac River, and also indirectly visible from other Government grounds and buildings; and

WHEREAS, the construction of a power station, with its towering chimneys, upon this site will be a hideous object in the forefront of the beauties of Washington upon which the nation is spending many millions of dollars;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the American Institute of Consulting Engineers hereby enters its earnest protest in the interest of the American people against the erection of a power station upon the proposed site on the waters of the Potomac River in the City of Washington, and recommends that work thereon be suspended pending a thorough and disinterested inquiry into the subject by the National Art Commission aided by competent engineering advice, with a view to a selection of a site that will not be offensive to the artistic sense of the nation and that will conform to economic principles; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of these resolutions be sent to the chairmen of the various legislative committees at Washington now considering this subject, and to the press, and also to the members of the Institute with a request that they bring the facts to the attention of those within their circle who will endeavor to convince their representatives in Congress that this matter is of national importance and should have the attention recommended herein.

(Signed) WILLIAM J. WILGUS, *Chairman,*
REGINALD PELHAM BOLTON,
COLIN M. INGERSOLL,
CHARLES W. LEAVITT,
RALPH D. MERSHON.

RESOLUTION OF NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF BUILDERS' EXCHANGES.

February 24, 1916.

RESOLVED, That it is the sense of the National Association of Builders' Exchanges of the United States, in convention assembled, that the proposed power plant on the Potomac at Washington, should not be erected without the approval of the Fine Arts Commission; and that each Delegation at once telegraph the Senators and Representatives of their States protesting against the erection of the proposed plant without first obtaining the approval of the Fine Arts Commission. JOHN TRAINOR, *President.*

A TELEGRAM TO THE PRESIDENT.

PRESIDENT WOODROW WILSON,
Washington, D. C.

Being personally familiar with Washington and with the plans of its development which when completely carried out will make it the most interesting Capital City of the world, I resent as an American citizen and as an architect having the effect marred by the erection of an unsightly power house and stacks located virtually within the park area and in full view of Lincoln Memorial. The physical appearance of Washington should be such as to command the admiration of our citizens and the respect of the world. I trust you will investigate location of Central Heating Plant thoroughly and make sure no mistake is made.

E. J. RUSSELL,
President Saint Louis Chapter
American Institute of Architects.

A TELEGRAM SENT TO CONGRESSMAN FITZGERALD, AND TO SENATORS MARTIN AND NEWLANDS, BY THE MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW YORK.

The Merchants' Association of New York, taking pride in the preservation of the beauty of our National Capital, vigorously protests against the proposition to install a heat, light and power plant on the Potomac channel adjacent to the Potomac Park and the Washington Monument. Such a plant with its tall chimneys and the necessary issuance of smoke therefrom would greatly detract from the beauty of the Mall, of the Park, and of the Washington Monument.

We therefore earnestly urge that the legislation pending for the erection of the plant on that site be not enacted and that some other site be selected which will not interfere with the beauty of the City of Washington, and particularly of the Monument to our first President.

SUMMARY.

Hundreds of protests, by telegraph and by letter, have been lodged with the President and with members of Congress. It is manifestly impossible to make more than this brief reference to them herein.

PROTESTS IN THE PUBLIC PRESS

From the "New Republic."

If we take the Treasury Department's explanation of failure to consult on the proposed new Government building at its face value, we can not help wondering at the amount of damage that may be done by a single oversight, provided the oversight is consistently carried out. For the damage to Washington's appearance will be great.

The Commission of Fine Arts does not object to a central light, heat and power plant for the Government buildings. It does oppose the erection of chimneys nearly two hundred feet high just south of the Mall, and plainly visible from many parts of the city. It opposes the placing of any power plant on this part of the Potomac, where it will ruin the design to give Washington a river front as beautiful as that of Paris.

All the Commission asked was that work be suspended until a more thorough study of the problem had been made. In comparison with the Commission's opinion upon the questions involved, the opinion of anyone in the Treasury Department is of no importance.

From the Washington "Star."

The plans for this work were not submitted to the Fine Arts Commission for a year after their inception, and then it was found that matters had progressed to a definite point of imminent consummation. This was in itself an improper ignoring of the body which has been designated to supervise from an artistic standpoint all public constructions in Washington, whose advice is always to be sought to avoid the commission of mistakes that militate against the general development of the Capital.

* * * * * * * *

The location of the plant is such that it would obtrude upon the vision from every angle. It would affect the landscape grievously.

* * * * * * * *

Taken altogether, it is plain that some authority must be exercised to stop a work against which so many sound objections are raised for a full reconsideration of the general project and of the details and designs.

From the New York Evening "Post."

The people who protest are not asking anything for themselves; their appeal is in behalf of us all. It is directed to the saving of what at present attracts no notice, but in the future will be priceless. Instead of being irritated because the protesters were slow in coming forward, we ought to be thankful that they have come forward at all.

* * * * * * * *

In the present instance, the objection has been impressively presented by associations representing practically the whole architectural profession of the country, by other associations comprising thousands of our most public-spirited citizens, and by individuals whose names carry the greatest possible weight in any question of art or of civic beauty. And what Senator Newlands proposed was simply that the Government be not irrevocably committed to the scheme until it had been examined and approved by the National Fine Arts Commission.

* * * * * * * *

Here in New York, where we can recall such experiences as the fight to keep the new court house out of City Hall Park, the fight to protect Riverside Park, and the long struggle for the rescue of the Palisades, we should be peculiarly appreciative of those who hold the fort in such a case as this of the Washington river front, and do all we can to help them to win their fight.

From the New York "Times."

* * * * * * * *

A glance at a plan of Washington, such a plan as was laid fruitlessly on every Senator's desk this week, should convince every eye. The Lincoln Memorial, the Mall, the Parks, the Capitol, the wide view from the Capitol across the Potomac, the whole pondered plan of Washington as it is and is to be, will be injured ineffacably by Mr. McAdoo's chimneys.

Yet it is said that they will begin to rise on March 1. Why is there such a hurry on a matter so grave and as to which expert opinion is united in opposition? The Senate should reconsider its vote of Monday, adopting the conference report. A project injurious in the judgment of so many competent and disinterested observers, to the beauty of the Capital, should at least be studied carefully. That is what Senator Newlands asked; and the Senate should grant it.

Meanwhile the American Federation of Arts, the American Institute of Architects, and the American Civic Association have properly appealed to the nation in behalf of an inestimable national possession.

From the Philadelphia "Public Ledger."

In the case of the power plant, though the Federal Commission of Fine Arts, the American Institute of Architects and the American Federation of Arts are against the site, the Secretary contents himself by truculently denying their allegations and calling their criticisms "false and audacious."

"Audacious" they are, in that they disagree with Mr. McAdoo, but "false" they certainly are not.

From the Boston "Transcript."

In selecting this site Congress may be said to have scored its chiefest triumph for the apostles of ugliness. Rising from it, the four great chimneys will dominate all possible views of the city and effectively neutralize once and for all every future attempt to beautify Washington.

* * * * * * * *

In this pass the American Federation of Arts and the National Institute of Architects have sought to withhold the hand of an all-making and all-marring Congress. The necessity that their protest should be supported by the indignant voice of every American citizen requires no irony to make its need plain.

* * * * * * * *

Further legislation should be enacted at once to make the consent of the Arts Commission absolutely essential, not merely optional, before any public building of whatever kind can be erected in Washington. The citizens of the United States do not propose to see the whole value and

purpose of the permanent plan to beautify Washington set at naught by the thoughtless acts of an unthinking Congress.

FROM THE MARCH NUMBER OF THE "AMERICAN MAGAZINE OF ART."

The Commission of Fine Arts is composed of Charles Moore, Cass Gilbert, Herbert Adams, Peirce Anderson, Thomas Hastings, Edwin H. Blashfield and Frederick Law Olmstead, experts in city planning and in matters pertaining to art. Certainly their judgment is final. The economy which is urged is that which has been found in the past exceedingly extravagant.

The point of view which is maintained by those in authority is that of ignorance which persists in disregarding the value of specialized knowledge and expert judgment. It is altogether a sorry and discouraging spectacle. A power plant ill-placed can be removed.

The grave question, therefore, is not whether the beauty of Washington be temporarily injured but whether the nation as a whole is prepared to recognize the value of art as a national asset and to avail itself of the expert service of those of its citizens who have added to an endowment of talent years of training, or whether it is still ignorant and blind. Monumental errors without number witness to such ignorance in the past. It is unfortunate that further testimony to this effect should be given and at such cost.

FROM THE NEW YORK "TRIBUNE."

There the proposed erection of a power plant on the shores of the Potomac threatens to invalidate all that has been done to make the national Capital one of the beautiful cities of the world. The realization of this scheme would be enough to cause McKim and Burnham to turn in their graves.

One does not need to argue about the idea of bringing a group of chimney stacks nearly two hundred feet high into the scheme to which those architects gave so much devoted thought, to which every artist in the country who cares at all for our public welfare is whole-heartedly committed. Merely to state the thing is to expose its imbecility.

For years a perfect flood of disinterested energy has gone to the gradual working out of a great sequence of monumental episodes, from the Capitol down to the Lincoln Memorial, which would readjust the city to L'Enfant's grand conception and add to it a splendor of which he hardly dreamed.

Now it is calmly arranged to bring into the ensemble a parcel of chimneys which would stick up like so many colossal sore thumbs, affronting mankind like a smear upon some fair statue. The incident cries aloud for the creation of a Ministry of Fine Arts, a department which might police Washington in the interests of civic appearances if it did nothing else.

The following letter was written by Thomas Jefferson while Ambassador to France in 1785, and is as pertinent today as when it was written. Washington and Jefferson believed in the value of expert advice.

PARIS, *September* 20, 1785.

". . . I received this summer a letter from Messrs. Buchanan and Hay, as Directors of the public buildings, desiring that I would have drawn for them plans of sundry public buildings, and, in the first place, of a capitol. They fixed, for their receiving this plan, a day which was within about six weeks of that on which their letter came to my hand.

I engaged an architect of capital abilities in this business. Much time was requisite, after the external form was agreed on, to make the internal distribution convenient for the three branches of government. This time was much lengthened by my avocations to other objects, which I had no right to neglect.

The plan, however, was settled. The gentlemen had sent me the one which they had thought of. The one agreed on here, is more convenient, more beautiful, gives more room, and will not cost more than two-thirds what that would.

"We took for our model what is called the Maison quarrée of Nismes, one of the most beautiful, if not the most beautiful and precious morsel of architecture left us by antiquity. It was built by Caius and Lucius Caesar, and repaired by Louis XV, and has the suffrage of all the judges of architecture who have seen it as yielding to no one of the beautiful monuments of Greece, Rome, Palmyra and Balbec, which late travelers have communicated to us.

It is very simple, but is noble beyond expression, and would have done honor to any country, as presenting to travelers a specimen of taste in our infancy, promising much for our maturer age.

"I have been much mortified with information I received two days ago from Virginia that the first brick of the Capitol would be laid within a few days. But surely the delay of this piece of a summer would have been repaired by the savings in the plan preparing here, were we to value its other superiorities as nothing.

But how is taste in this beautiful art to be formed in our countrymen unless we avail ourselves of every occasion when public buildings are to be erected, of presenting to them models for their study and imitation? Pray try if you can affect the stopping of this work. I have written also to E. R.[1] on this subject.

The loss will be only of the laying of the bricks already laid, or a part of them. The bricks themselves will do again for the interior walls, and one side wall and one end wall may remain, as they will answer equally well for our plan.

This loss is not to be weighed against the saving of money which will arise against the comfort of laying out the public money for something honorable, the satisfaction of seeing an object and proof of national good taste, and the regret and mortification of erecting a monument to our barbarism, which will be loathed with execrations as long as it shall endure.

The plans are in good forwardness, and I hope will be ready within three or four weeks. They could not be stopped now, but on paying their whole price, which will be considerable. If the undertakers are afraid to undo what they have done encourage them to do it by a recommendation of the Assembly.

"You see I am an enthusiast in the subject of the arts. But it is an enthusiasm of which I am not ashamed, as its object is to improve the taste of my countrymen, to increase their reputation, to reconcile to them the respect of the world and procure them its praise."[2]

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

---

[1]Edmund Randolph.

[2]Bergh, Vol. 5, p. 134 ff.

END OF
TITLE